

HR Weekly Podcast

6/27/2008

Today is June 26, 2008, and welcome to the HR Weekly Podcast from the State Office of Human Resources. Today's topic concerns human resources related legislation recently enacted by the South Carolina General Assembly.

The South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act, House Bill 4400, was signed into law by Governor Sanford on June 4, 2008, and requires all public sector employers to verify that all new employees have work authorization in the United States. Work authorizations of new employees will be verified through use of the federal work authorization program, currently known as E-Verify, beginning on January 1, 2009. This bill was discussed in detail in the June 5th podcast.

Also on June 4, 2008, Governor Sanford signed H3326, a bill that provides that a governmental entity which has assumed the cost of training a law enforcement officer may be reimbursed for these costs by a governmental entity that subsequently hires the law enforcement officer within a two-year period. Every governmental entity, including the State or any of its political subdivisions, after July 1, 2007, who intends to employ a law enforcement officer who has satisfactorily completed mandatory training is affected.

Another house bill, H4876, provides for eligible retired members of the South Carolina Retirement System and the Police Officers Retirement System to receive an annual cost-of-living adjustment of at least two percent each July 1. On June 17, 2008, the State Budget and Control Board, as trustees for the Retirement Systems, approved an increase in the assumed rate of investment which will authorize a two percent increase on July 1, 2008.

Known as the Budget Proviso Codification Act of 2008, Senate Bill 530, provides for the codification of specific provisos from the Annual Appropriation Act into the South Carolina Code of Laws. Examples of human resources related provisos that are being codified include military leave when serving in a combat zone, higher education furlough programs, and residency preference for state employment.

The following proviso changes or additions are included in the Annual Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year 2008-2009:

Proviso 89.105 concerning healthcare employee recruitment and retention allows specific healthcare agencies to spend state, federal, and other sources of revenue to provide compensation and education incentives to aid in recruiting and retaining healthcare workers in critical needs healthcare jobs.

Proviso 89.113 concerning voluntary furloughs allows state agencies to institute a voluntary employee furlough program for not more than 90 days per fiscal year when the general funds appropriated are less than the general funds appropriated for that agency in the preceding fiscal year or when an across-the-board budget reduction is implemented.

Also Proviso 80A.9, which provides for the compensation for agency heads, was amended to change the process of approving agency head salary increases.

Proviso 80A.47 provided for a one percent compensation increase for classified employees effective on the first pay date that occurs on or after July 1 of Fiscal Year 2008-2009. The State Budget and Control Board approved a zero to one percent range for increases for faculty, executive compensation, and non-academic unclassified employees based on the funding authorized by this proviso.

Proviso 89.79 which allows for employee bonuses has also been amended. The dollar amount has been increased from two thousand to three thousand dollars per year. In addition, the proviso states: “Employees earning \$100,000 or more shall not be eligible to receive bonuses under this provision.”

In addition, Proviso 80A.19, which previously allowed agencies to implement mandatory furloughs has been deleted from the Annual Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

For complete details of these pieces of legislation, please refer to the South Carolina General Assembly website at www.scstatehouse.net or the Office of Human Resources website at www.ohr.sc.gov .

If you have any questions, please contact your HR Consultant at 737-0900.

Thank you.